UNITED
NATIONS

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Economic and Social
Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.4/1998/NGO/96
27 March 1998

Original: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Fifty-fourth session
Agenda item 10

QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS IN ANY PART OF THE WORLD, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO COLONIAL AND OTHER DEPENDENT COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES

Written statement submitted by Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1296 (XLIV).

[13 March 1998]

1. Arab intellectuals and human rights activists meeting at the invitation of the Arab Regional Working Group on Human Rights (ARWGHR),* hosted by the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (10-12 March 1998), after a general discussion of the situation in Algeria, solely on the basis of humanitarian and human rights principles:

(a) Condemn all acts of terrorism carried out in the name of religion or any other purposes, and specifically the brutal massacres which have led to the deaths of tens of thousands of unarmed civilians, and which constitute crimes against humanity;

(b) Call on the Algerian authorities to fulfil their responsibilities in protecting the security of the population in full accordance with human rights standards and the Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials;

(c) Denounce all patterns of human rights violations carried out in the context of the bloody conflict in Algeria and call for their immediate cessation;

(d) Appeal to the Algerian authorities to remove all obstacles hindering the activities of Algerian civil society; allow individuals and groups to exercise their fundamental rights, specifically their rights to freedom of expression and opinion and association and the right to seek and impart information; and to guarantee freedom of the media;

(e) Urge that international governmental and non-governmental organizations be allowed to carry out their functions in accordance with international humanitarian law and international human rights agreements and conventions signed or ratified by Algeria.

2. ARWGHR has decided to set up:

(a) An independent, non-governmental team of experts and human rights activists to conduct fact-finding activities on the horrendous massacres and other forms of human rights violations in Algeria. The team will seek to collect testimonies from all possible sources;

(b) A data bank on the Algerian situation.

3. ARWGHR calls upon all parties, Algerian, Arab and international, to cooperate with the team. It also calls upon the Algerian Government to cooperate with the team and facilitate its tasks inside Algeria.

4. ARWGHR invites all Arab intellectuals, public figures and human rights activists to endorse this declaration.

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* The Arab Regional Working Group on Human Rights is a team of experts and human rights activists working for the development of the Arab human rights movement and its stances. CIHRS is currently acting as the secretariat for the ARWGHR.